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For the very first time Rob was on a business trip for the foundations. He was dressed in coat and tie and excited about what the day would be like, yet he also wanted to appear as if he had his act under control.

The people who personally escorted Rob over to the Bishop knew him and were filled with questions about his mission. Rob said, “The truth is, you fellows know more than I do. I’m just going over ahead of Dad. When you get him here we’ll all know what we are going to do, after he asks Evelyn,” to which they all had a laugh.

The Bishop was waiting, and they were off to the hotel ballroom. The Bishop was more interested in Rob’s recent graduation than what had happened the previous night.

Rob’s hunch was that the Bishop would turn the stage over to his dad and then the sweating would begin for Rob—that is, if Derek acted like he did the night before.

As the evening had begun and the dry cleaning was being tended to, Rob entered the ballroom without having dressed and stood in the back listening to the Bishop talk to the service personnel, all of whom were totally distraught about such a short stay with their families. The military couples looked middle-aged, and their kids were about the same age as Rob—as best as he could determine. His plans were to dress while the group had dinner.

The big problem for Rob was that the orchestra on the Foundation’s payroll was not here and would not be. The music would be up to him and his dad.

Much to his surprise, the Bishop, after pronouncing a blessing prior to their meal, told the military families that he had arranged entertainment for them while they ate. This announcement came as a complete surprise to the entertainer.

“And now I ask for a rousing round of applause to help me get a young man on stage you will enjoy knowing. Welcome, please, Rob Davidson.”

The crowd went wild, just as though they had known him for years. Rob was petrified, yet he stood and in a short jog jumped up on stage as if he knew exactly what he was doing.

“Rob Davidson, ladies and gentlemen,” the Bishop said and exited the stage.

Rob, still petrified, walked over to the stage microphone and looked out across an audience with every woman present having eyes that looked as if they had been on an extended drunk from grief. He assumed it was from grief for losing their husbands again to overseas duty. Some of the kids looked the same.

After a long moment, Rob said, “Ladies and gentlemen, if my dad saw me on stage with a pair of pants as wrinkled as the ones I have on, it would be the end of me. The Bishop pulled this on me, and I will be the loser when my dad finds out about it. But, I’ll say this: given the circumstances of this evening’s banquet I believe he’d let me off the hook if I wore my swim trunks!

“Since the Bishop is a devilish fellow, as you’ve just witnessed, and since I know nothing about what you like, I’ll make a deal with you. I’ll begin with a little dinner music, and then we’ll continue into whatever you want it to be. We’ll sing, we’ll dance, or we’ll do anything the Bishop will let us. I guess we have about thirty minutes to have fun, so I’d better begin.”

The Bishop yelled from his table, “You’ve got as long as these folks want to stay, even if it’s all night, Now have at it since you are already on stage.” This remark brought a thunderous roar from the audience.

Rob diddled around a few soft dance numbers for the most of the dinner hour until someone yelled out “The Impossible Dream.” Thankfully Rob knew it. He transitioned himself away from the piece he was playing and sung the song to resounding

applause. He found out later it was the Bishop who requested the number because he had heard Derek sing it so many times.

When finished with the song, Rob asked from the piano, “Who among you—servicemen or family members—will have a birthday during this deployment?” Almost everyone held up their hand.

“Let’s sing ‘Happy Birthday’ to each other and celebrate the birthdays now.” He began to play, and the singing was pitiful because of the situation. Rob stopped them in mid-song and said, “I know you can sing better than that. Let’s stand and try it again.” On the second attempt the song was much better.

“Since there are those who will have anniversaries while deployed, here is ‘The Anniversary Waltz.’ I invite you to dance if you will.” To his amazement the dance floor filled to capacity, and he played it until they tired of it.

While the waltz was in progress, Derek walked in, and the Bishop saw him. “I believe you’ve lost your job to Rob. He has handled the audience like a pro. Has he ever been out with you?”

“Only last night,” Derek answered.

“Well, he is doing a whale of a job here.”

When the waltz finished, Rob asked, “Young people, tell me what you’d like to dance to.” All sorts of numbers were suggested. “Will you dance if I can play them?” To this question he received a resounding “yes.”

The floor filled with folks in their teens and twenties, and Rob played requests for at least an hour. Lots of rock and roll, line dance numbers, and nothing slow. The parents were having fun just watching them, yet some couldn’t contain themselves and joined the youngsters on the floor.

The Bishop turned to Derek and said, “I believe this has gone on long enough. These folks will be departing tomorrow, and I know they want some family time. I’ll introduce you and say a word to the audience, and you figure out how to end the evening.”

Now Derek was the one in a quandary. What should he do with such an occasion? What should he say?

The Bishop stopped the dancing and Rob's playing and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, we've had a great time here, and Rob Davidson deserves our sincere appreciation since he had no knowledge he would be performing here. I sort of pulled it on him." The crowd gave Rob a standing ovation, to which he responded as best he could—although he was a bit embarrassed by it all.

The Bishop then asked the audience, "Would you please stand and join Rob in a song?" The Bishop turned to Rob and asked, "Do you know 'Let There Be Peace on Earth'?" He nodded and began. When Rob started, Derek came to the stage to assist. Most of the audience helped sing the number, although some were too emotional to even attempt singing.

"Now I have another surprise for you. While you were dancing the last number, a special guest arrived. I would like to introduce Rob's father, the internationally famous Derek Davidson, ladies and gentlemen. You should also know they were in Minneapolis last night on another assignment, and I imposed upon them around midnight to come here. They are headed west for a few days of father-and-son vacation, and we should offer our sincere thanks for their coming here tonight." The crowd responded again since they knew and loved him already.

When Derek acknowledged the introduction, it was evident he had worn his clothing since very early that morning. His coat was wrinkled, and his pants were beyond help. His collar wasn't buttoned. Rob said, "Dad, do you realize how you look and all the things you've taught me about being dressed on stage?" After saying this, Rob just cackled out into the microphone with a laughter that was so infectious the crowd roared.

Derek looked down and turned to Rob with a menacing look and then back to the audience and said, "Only through the

mouth of a smart-aleck, spoiled brat of a kid would you expect such a remark.” This brought another tremendous laugh and applause.

Derek continued, “Rob is correct. We don’t appear in wrinkled clothing. This is an absolute first for me. The Bishop asked that we come over tonight, and we had to respond because of who he is and more important who you are. We are appreciative of the sacrifice you are making in the name of our country as well as the sacrifice your family is making. We know you’ve had too short a break and are not looking forward to leaving again so soon. I don’t know quite what we could do to ease the pain you must feel at this time. If I knew it would certainly be done. Since the hour is late and since we want to do the right thing, I want to ask you to stand and allow Rob and me to sing ‘The Lord’s Prayer’ to close. If you would like to sing along, feel free to do so.”

Rob began the introduction as the folks were standing, and at the appropriate moment both began to sing “The Lord’s Prayer.” To their amazement the entire crowd joined in, and it was one of the more heartwarming moments Derek had ever known. It was a moving rendition of this age-old classic, and when everyone started to sing, Derek directed them.

When the number ended, the Bishop asked the crowd to give Rob and Derek a chance to get to the hall so their appreciation could be expressed. Rob had never experienced such a thing.

Everyone was so nice and congratulatory that it all left him speechless. He did his best to respond by thanking the men for their service to the country. There were some younger, great-looking girls whom he did not mind hugging at all. A few even kissed him.

When they were all gone, Derek walked over to Rob, who was wet with perspiration. Derek gave him a bear hug and said, “The Bishop has told me how you handled the crowd. I’m very,

very proud of you and would not have subjected you to this had I known it was coming.”

“Yeah, right. He set me up, didn’t he, Bishop?” Rob responded.

“Rightfully, Rob, no. Your dad thought this was coming tomorrow night, and so did I until the service personnel had their orders changed. Thank goodness you were here, Rob. We may not need your dad anymore since you were totally professional. I think the two of us can handle it.”

Since Rob had had nothing to eat, they went to the hotel coffee shop, which allowed Rob time for a meal. Derek had already had a sandwich earlier. While Rob was eating, Derek and the Bishop discussed the program and bragged on and encouraged Rob. He felt so much better about himself and his ability after being caught in such a predicament without Derek. He was gaining his professional footing.

“Son, I’m sorry, but the jet is waiting to take you to the ranch. Someone will be waiting up for you according to Evelyn’s instructions and help you get situated. I will see you day after tomorrow. You will have a chance to rest up and think about how you could have improved on tonight.”

The Bishop responded, “Rob, regardless of how your father kids you about tonight, remember it is good-natured. I’m telling you straight out you did a fabulous job, and on the spur of the moment. I know talent, and you are running over with it. It shows in your musical ability, and I know there will be a wonderful future in store for you.” Saying these words, the Bishop gave him a hug.

“Thank you, sir,” was about all Rob could get out since his emotions were coming to the fore and since his sense of accomplishment was beginning to surface within himself. He also considered all the mistakes he made that others knew nothing about. Those things were beginning to play heavily on his mind.